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ABSTRACT

This annotated review of law-related education (LRE) research is organized into three parts. The first reviews research studies devoted to the impact or effects of law-related education on students in school settings. The second reviews studies relating to the process of implementing LRE in classrooms/schools. The third reviews studies of LRE in non-school settings. (Author/BB)

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A Descriptive Review of LRE Research

Social Science Education Consortium Staff

In developing this review of research, the Social Science Education Consortium staff tried to discover all research studies relating to LRE that had been conducted over the past two to three decades. The first line of inquiry drew on secondary research that has assessed the state of the art at several points in the past 10 years. In 1983, the National Law-Related Education Evaluation Program (NLREEP) produced an overview of prior research on the impact of LRE on students as part of the final report on a national evaluation of LRE. In 1991, Dorothy Skeel summarized the status of the research on LRE, one part of which concerned the impact of LRE on students. Both these studies used conventional scholarly sources--searching the ERIC database for every reference to LRE, searching Dissertation Abstracts and reviews of doctoral dissertations in the social studies, and reviews of scholarly journals in social studies and in education generally--to discover the state of the research.

The second line of inquiry consisted of a series of surveys of various organizations and networks involved in LRE. These surveys were conducted in early 1994. The first survey focused on the network of state LRE project directors. The second survey targeted U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice LRE and National Diffusion Network program grantees. The third survey focused on other researchers we believe to be active in this area. The fourth targeted the juvenile justice community (the latter will be reported in the second part of this compendium). Finally, SSEC staff has conducted extensive ERIC searches, secondary educational research literature reviews, and searches in Dissertation Abstracts to uncover research relating to LRE that may have been missed before or that may be of recent origin.

This descriptive review of research relating to LRE is organized into three parts. The first contains research studies devoted to the impact or effects of law-related education on students in school settings. The second section contains descriptions of studies relating to the process of implementing LRE in classrooms/schools. The third section presents studies of LRE in non-school settings.

1. The Effects of Law-Related Education on Students

Everyone wants students to achieve some important learning outcomes as a result of their schooling--**to know** something, **to be able to do** something, and **to feel** one way or another about something when they complete their school courses. Evidence of the positive impact of LRE on students is therefore fundamental. If this evidence is lacking, then other research--how LRE programs are implemented, or how many school districts actually offer LRE elective courses, or to what extent LRE is infused into the ongoing curricula of the nation's schools--is largely beside the point.

The studies included in this section are arranged according to grade level. Within each grade level designation, the studies are arranged chronologically.

A. LRE at the Elementary Level

Joseph, H. (1980). *The Development of a Curriculum Model for the Teaching of Law-Related Education for the Sixth Grade.* Doctoral Dissertation. Temple University.

Joseph developed and field-tested a curriculum in law and legal concepts for sixth-graders. One urban and one suburban classroom participated in an eight-week unit focusing on the concepts of liberty, justice, and equality. In addition, the curriculum model also included experiential teaching strategies for

exploring the three LRE concepts. These strategies included mock trials, simulations, case study analysis, and role playing. The study concluded that a LRE curriculum can be developed for sixth-graders that incorporates knowledge building, value analysis, and moral and legal reasoning skills--sixth-graders can conceptualize the ideas of liberty, justice, and equality. Further, Joseph recommended that social studies educators examine utilizing LRE strategies and content to improve traditional civics instruction and that they explore the possible advantages of introducing LRE curriculum and instruction in the elementary grades.

Jacobson, M., and S. Palonsky. (1981). "Effects of a Law-Related Education Program." *Elementary School Journal*. 82: 49-57.

This study analyzed the impact of a carefully developed and regularly implemented program of LRE instruction for fifth- and sixth-grade students. Their study was designed to test three hypotheses: (1) significant positive change in student attitudes toward the law would occur when students were exposed to an LRE program as compared with control group students; (2) knowledge of the law and legal concepts would be significantly enhanced for students exposed to the LRE program; and (3) the change in attitude would be positively correlated with changes in knowledge. The researchers discovered that gains in legal concepts (knowledge) favored the LRE students. They also reported changes in the desired direction in fifth- and sixth-grade students' attitudes toward the law, legal processes, crime, criminals, and punishment. Jacobson and Palonsky nevertheless found virtually no association between knowledge of legal concepts and positive attitudes among LRE students. They concluded that the students who learned the most about the law were not necessarily those who developed more favorable attitudes toward the law.

Picard, R. (1984). *The Effects of Justice Education on the Attitudes and Knowledge of Elementary School Children Regarding the Justice System*. Doctoral Dissertation. Temple University.

The purpose of Picard's study was to evaluate the Justice Education Teaching Strategies (JETS), an elementary LRE program developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The research question was: can a six-week JETS program significantly increase knowledge of the justice system and effect positive changes in student attitudes toward the justice system. Two classes at each of grades 4-6 comprised the experimental groups included in the study, while one class at each grade level served as control groups. The teachers in the experimental group received two hours of inservice training on the JETS materials. Based on pre- and posttests of knowledge and attitudes, the JETS program significantly increased the students' knowledge of the justice system and their attitudes toward that system compared to the control groups.

Van Decar, P. (1984). *The Effect of Law-Related Education on Students' Attitudes and Knowledge About Authority and the Legal System*. Doctoral Dissertation. Vanderbilt University, George Peabody College for Teachers.

Van Decar's doctoral research produced findings similar to the Jacobson and Palonsky study cited above. Van Decar found that LRE increased students' knowledge of authority and the legal system, their sense of efficacy, and their ability to critically examine legal issues from a variety of perspectives. Sixth- and ninth-grade students exposed to LRE were more likely than comparison students to hold authorities accountable to standards of responsible conduct, to stress positive rather than prohibitive functions of the legal system, and to have conceptions of active citizen participation and their own roles within the legal system.

Markowitz, A. (1986). *The Impact of Law-Related Education on Elementary*

School Children in Reducing Delinquent Behavior. Doctoral Dissertation. Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey.

Markowitz's doctoral research tried to determine whether increased knowledge of the law can have a positive impact on the social attitudes and behavior patterns of children in grades 2, 3, and 4. There was some indication of a positive impact on children's attitudes toward authority and justice in the second grade. Fourth-graders showed some improvement of behavior, but without corresponding changes in their attitudes. Traditional didactic teachers seemed to yield greater knowledge gains while non-traditional teachers appeared to foster improved student attitudes and behaviors.

Esfondari, Mahtash. (1998). "Assessment of Citizenship/Law-Related Education on Violent and Antisocial Behavior." In *Compendium of Research Supporting Law-Related Education, Part II: Alternative Conceptions/Applications of Law-Related Education*. Boulder, CO: Social Science Education Consortium.

Esfondari evaluated an upper elementary/ middle school intervention developed by the Center for Civic Education and the Constitutional Rights Foundation-Los Angeles, using their existing materials as the curriculum's foundation. The goals of the intervention, which was tested at an urban intermediate school with a primarily Latino population, were to (1) develop understanding about issues of authority, justice, community, violence, the role of law and public institutions in resolving conflict, (2) increase cognitive and social skills, and (3) develop more positive attitudes toward law, authority, prosocial behavior, and the community. The curriculum featured active learning and a major culminating activity (either a service learning project or a simulated congressional hearing). The curriculum was tested in one fifth- and one sixth-grade class, as well as in a special class of 12 at-risk students; in the two "regular" classrooms, both quantitative and qualitative measures were used; with the at-risk students, only qualitative measures were used. One fifth- and one sixth-grade classroom served as controls.

Results indicated that students in both experimental classrooms showed greater knowledge gains than the students in the control classes. While the quantitative measures did not show improvements in pro-social attitudes among the experimental students, the qualitative measures (focus groups, classroom observations, and teacher interviews) did suggest that the subjects did improve their attitudes toward working in cooperative groups and acting in a pro-social manner (fifth-grade) and toward social studies and rules (sixth-grade). The qualitative measures used with at-risk students indicated that these students perceived that the intervention materials helped them learn more, experience fewer discipline problems at school, have better attendance, and behave better.

Social Science Education Consortium (1998). "Final Evaluation Report: Violence-prevention Outcomes in Civic Education." In *Compendium of Research Supporting Law-Related Education, Part II: Alternative Conceptions/Applications of Law-Related Education*. Boulder, CO: Social Science Education Consortium.

VOICE is a seven-unit, yearlong law-related education curriculum that uses interactive strategies and community resource persons, integrating conflict resolution skill building and a service project with traditional social studies content. The program, which was developed by the Constitutional Rights Foundation-Chicago and the American Bar Association, aims to influence students' knowledge (e.g., purposes of government, ideals of democracy), skills (e.g., inquiry, decision making, discourse), beliefs (importance of public discourse, commitment to public good), and actions (responsible personal conduct and community participation). The VOICE evaluation was conducted in 11 fifth-grade classes in Chicago and Elgin, Illinois, with many at-risk students enrolled; seven classes in the two cities served as controls. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected.

The quantitative data revealed that VOICE students' knowledge and skill scores showed greater gains than did those of the control students. The quantitative data further showed that the VOICE program has desirable effects on student attitudes, primarily related to the classroom context. Attitudes toward variables outside the classroom proved more resistant to change. The qualitative data tends to support the finding that VOICE students felt very positively about their classmates, the teacher, the curriculum, and resource people who visited their classes. The items designed to assess behavior change showed essentially no change, although principals, when interviewed, indicated that discipline and fighting decreased after the implementation of VOICE. The researchers speculate that ceiling effects and the large number of items on the test may have prevented the program from showing an impact on behavior.

B. LRE at the Junior High and Middle School Level

Hoffman, M., and D. German. (1973). *Youth and the Law: An Evaluation of the Effects of the Introduction of Legal Materials on Youth Attitudes and Cognitions*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Law Enforcement Assistance Administration.

Hoffman and German studied seventh- and eighth-grade students who had been exposed to LRE (in the form of a booklet prepared by the North Carolina Attorney General's office). Their research indicated that these students became more knowledgeable about the state's laws than students who did not receive the LRE program. Hoffman and German also reported that students who received the booklet became more positive than comparison students in their attitudes toward police and the law, but **less** supportive of constitutional rights.

Johnson, G., and R. Hunter. (1987). *Using School-Based Programs to Improve Students' Citizenship in Colorado: A Report to Colorado Educators*. Denver, CO: The Colorado Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Council.

Following the national evaluation reported in Section A of this compendium, Center for Action Research staff provided training for teams from Colorado schools made up of building administrators, teachers, and police. These weeklong training programs focused on implementing a course that incorporated the features identified in the national study as providing more effective LRE.

Results at four of the five schools were favorable. In the cases of two schools in which students were randomly assigned to semester-long LRE classes and control (traditional civics) classes, the results both on attitude dimensions linked to delinquency prevention theory and on self-reported delinquent behavior were extremely positive. At a third school, fewer classroom hours were devoted to LRE; while results were generally positive, the differences between LRE and control students were smaller and observed on fewer variables than at the two schools mentioned above. At the fourth school, a shortened questionnaire was administered due to students' poor reading skills. LRE students had more favorable results than controls on five of seven theory-based dimensions; the LRE students also showed moderate reductions in their frequency of committing six of 11 types of delinquent acts assessed.

The fifth school implemented LRE as the result of a district-level decision and the district retained control of the LRE program during implementation; little positive effect resulted from the LRE course, which observations showed did not reflect the features identified as critical in the national study and presented at the weeklong training.

Hunter and Johnson concluded that the recommendations from the national study appeared appropriate. Where the features were verified by observers as being present in

classrooms, the LRE courses produced measured improvements. They also noted that while district support for LRE was important, district control was a negative for program success. Further, they observed that when a specific topic was the focus of effective LRE lessons (e.g., vandalism), self-reports of that behavior decreased to a greater degree than in classes where the topic was not specifically covered. Finally, Hunter and Johnson concluded that "with suitable training, any school can do it [LRE] right. In Colorado, effective implementation of LRE has occurred in suburban, rural, and inner-city schools--including those serving a variety of ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds and at least one having a high proportion of slow readers."

Fernlund, P. M. (1992). *Perspectives on Law and Government: A Study of Eighth-Graders*. Unpublished paper. Boulder, CO: Social Science Education Consortium.

Fernlund looked at how eighth-grade students relate information from formal study of the Constitution into their personal knowledge about society and government. Two instruments were used to tap political cognition at a deeper level than measured by survey instruments: conceptual maps and interviews based on a hypothetical scenario. Results of the study indicated that conceptual maps are useful tools for assessing conceptual understanding, although multiple measures are required to get a complete picture of student understandings. Students' conceptions of such concepts as democracy were influenced by prior experience; many students' conceptions did become more developed after instruction on the Constitution. However, Fernlund concluded that students need assistance in integrating the formal curriculum with their preexisting knowledge structures.

Avery, P., K. Bird, S. Johnstone, J. Sullivan, and K. Thalhammer. (1992). *Do All of the People Have All of the Rights All of the Time? Exploring Political Tolerance with Adolescents*. Unpublished paper. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement.

Avery and her associates developed and tested a curriculum that had students explore the linkages among democratic values, legal principles, and their application to unpopular groups in U.S. society. Their analysis demonstrated a statistically significant increase in political tolerance and found those increases to be directly related to increases in student knowledge. Student responses to open-ended items suggested that increases in political tolerance are due to a greater awareness of individual rights, while decreases in tolerance may be attributed to concerns for public safety.

These findings are important, given that most prior research on political socialization had suggested that traditional formal civics curriculum has had limited impact on students' civic attitudes (e.g., Ehman 1980) and political tolerance--the willingness to acknowledge the civil liberties of those with whom one disagrees. Other researchers working in the mid-1970s (e.g., Zellman 1975; Goldenson 1978), however, suggested that civics courses treated democratic norms in too abstract a fashion, that those values were not sufficiently linked to real-world political situations to have any impact on student attitudes. They theorized that classrooms that linked democratic values to political realities might increase students' levels of political tolerance. This study helps confirm this notion. See Avery (1998) for an extended review of the research literature on political tolerance.

Gruenhagen, K., and B. Leslein. (1993). "Using Law-Related Education as a Lifeline for Rural At-Risk Students." In D. Montgomery, ed. *Rural America: Where All Innovations Begin*. Conference Proceedings (Savannah, GA, March 11-13).

Project NEXUS, a rural Appalachian program designed to address dropout prevention and pre-delinquent factors among students, was implemented in Ellijay (Georgia) Middle

School. A group of 25 students, chosen because of discipline referrals or other risk factors, were invited to join the program. Fifteen to eighteen attended weekly meetings throughout the program's first year. Community resource persons participated in the meetings. The NEXUS program also featured field experiences, including such things as juvenile hearings in teen court and local court room observations. Teachers of the NEXUS students reported student improvement in classroom participation, cooperation with the teacher, and attendance. Virtually all students made positive comments about the program.

C. LRE at the High School Level

Donovan, D. (1975). *Turning Students on to Active Citizenship*. Pittman, NJ: Institute for Political and Legal Education.

Donovan compared a group of students who were exposed to an LRE course with students who did not take an LRE course. Donovan found that law-related knowledge gains favored the experimental students. Donovan also explored one measure of student attitudes and found that LRE students had greater desire to become involved in government than those who did not take the course.

Denton, J., and J. Kracht. (1976). *Final Evaluation Report of Teacher Training Projects*. Unpublished Report. Dallas, TX: Law in a Changing Society.

This study compared the knowledge gains of students who took an LRE course taught by trained teachers with students who took a LRE course taught by untrained teachers. These researchers found that students taught by trained teachers learned significantly more than those whose teachers were not trained.

Nelson, E. (1979). *Final Evaluation of the "Criminal Justice in the Classroom Project."* Unpublished Report. Tempe, AZ: Tempe Union High School and the Arizona State University Center for Criminal Justice.

Nelson compared students who were exposed to LRE with others who were not so exposed. Nelson found that the LRE students had greater knowledge gains than the comparison group. Nelson also found no direct LRE program effects on high school students' attitudes.

Carroll, J., E. Nelson, and N. Eisenberg-Berg. (1980). *Law-Related Education: Assessing Adolescents' Knowledge and Attitudes*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Boston.

Carroll and his colleagues assessed the relationships between existing levels of law-related knowledge (obtained from any source, not necessarily an LRE course) and several attitude variables among students in Arizona high schools. The researchers reported a significant negative correlation between law-related knowledge and authoritarian attitudes and a significant positive correlation between law-related knowledge and both legal-social responsibilities and educational expectations.

Fraser, B. and D. Smith. (1980). "Impact of Law-Related Education Materials on Student Cognitive and Affective Outcomes." *The Social Studies*. 71 (3): 139-42.

The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the impact of the High School Education Law Project (HELP) in Australian high schools (largely in Sidney). The evaluation looked at two primary student measures—cognitive and affective domains. Usable responses were obtained from 224 students in the experimental group (in nine schools) and from 96 students in a control group. Fraser and Smith found statistically significant differences in favor of the experimental group on cognitive measures (with entry-level achievement controlled) on 15 of 16 cognitive measures. In addition, the

evaluators found that students of higher IQ outperformed students of lower IQ on the cognitive criterion test. With respect to measures of student attitudes, the evaluators initially found few suitable tests for the purpose relative to LRE. Thus, Fraser and Smith created their own attitude test. In the end, the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group on one of five attitude measures (i.e., the "influenceability of law"--the extent to which the public can influence the making and nature of laws). There were no significant differences between the two groups on the other four (i.e., judges are "normal" people; students enjoy their law studies; the law is ever-changing; the extent to which the law is understandable).

Fielding, G., E. Kameenui, and R. Gersten. (1983). "A Comparison of an Inquiry and a Direct Instruction Approach to Teaching Legal Concepts and Applications to Secondary School Students." *Journal of Educational Research*. 76 (5): 287-93.

High school students were taught a two-week unit on the constitutional rights of youth. Five groups of students received a direct instruction treatment and five groups received an inquiry treatment. Students in the groups receiving direct instruction scored significantly higher on both a multiple-choice test and an essay test requiring the application of what was learned about constitutional principles to unfamiliar cases. On the other hand, students receiving inquiry instruction scored significantly higher on an essay test requiring the expression of personal opinions on policy issues underlying the studied cases. Furthermore, an attitude questionnaire indicated that students in the inquiry groups found the content more challenging than the students receiving direct instruction.

Harwood, A.M. (1990). *The Effects of Close Up Participation on High School Students' Political Attitudes*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Education Research Association, Boston, April.

Harwood looked at the effects of participating in Close Up's experiential program on high school students' attitudes toward political institutions and on their political behavior. Georgia students participating in Close Up's one-week on-site program in Washington, DC, were randomly selected for participation. The 58 experimental subjects were compared with 113 control subjects. The data indicated that the Close Up experience increased positive feelings toward government and stimulated political participation.

Ford, L. (1991). *The United States Political System: Adolescent Perceptions and the Role for Citizenship Education*. Doctoral Dissertation. University of Maryland, College Park.

Ford's research rested on the following assumption: high school civics classes have been found only marginally effective in transmitting a participatory civic culture to students and those students report that American government and politics is "boring." As adults, therefore, these young people are likely to be citizen spectators. Her research therefore investigated the possible differences between students who completed a traditional classroom-based civics course with other students who completed a CloseUp Foundation Washington Focus Week in addition to a traditional civics course. The results indicated that the experimental group exhibited slightly higher political efficacy, lower trust of government, and were more likely to be involved in their school culture as well as in some political activities. In addition, a subsample of survey participants were interviewed and were presented with hypothetical political dilemmas. The experimental group tended to develop more complex solutions to the problems and dilemmas posed, more accurately reflecting the existing political structure. On the other hand, politics seemed to remain uninteresting to all the adolescents surveyed.

Johnson, G. (1992). *Evaluation of Street Law Classes at Four American High Schools in*

Germany. Unpublished report. Boulder, CO: University of Colorado, Center for Action Research.

The *Street Law* instructional program implemented in four Department of Defense Dependent Schools (DODDS) in Germany was the focus of this study. Students taking a semester-long *Street Law* course were compared to students who did not take this course. The results favored the experimental students (i.e., the *Street Law* students) on 10 of 20 measures of knowledge and attitudes and favored the control students on **none** of these measures. Among those measures showing the largest effect sizes were (1) knowledge of the law, (2) enthusiasm toward school and classes, (3) timely preparation and completion of assignments, (4) belief that students were treated fairly in school, and (5) perceived opportunity to demonstrate competence in school.

Social Studies Development Center. (1993). *An Evaluation of the Instructional Effects of the We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution Program*. Unpublished report. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, Social Studies Development Center.

The researchers conducting this study compared high school students who studied the Constitution and Bill of Rights in government and civics classes using traditional textbooks with students participating in the We the People... program and who used that program's text *With Liberty and Justice for All*. It demonstrated that students who participated in the We the People... program scored significantly higher on a test of knowledge than did the students in more traditional classes. The results of this study conformed to findings of several previous studies conducted by the Educational Testing Service.

Brody, R. (1994). *Secondary Education and Political Attitudes: Examining the Effects of Political Tolerance on the We the People... Curriculum*. Unpublished paper. Calabasas, CA: Center for Civic Education.

Brody's study was designed to determine the degree to which civics curricula in general, and the We the People... program in particular, affect students' political attitudes. Brody found that students in high school civics, government, and U.S. history classes display more political tolerance (defined as citizens' respect for the political rights and civil liberties of all people in the society, including those whose ideas they may find distasteful or abhorrent) than the average American. He also found that students in classes using all or part of the We the People... curriculum were more tolerant than comparison students using other curricula because it promotes higher levels of self-confidence and the perception of fewer limits on students' own political freedoms. Finally, Brody found that among students exposed to the We the People... program, those involved in the simulated congressional hearing competitions demonstrated the highest levels of political tolerance. Brody's study is also important in terms of the research conducted on political socialization and political tolerance (e.g., see Avery et al. 1992).

Butler, J. (1995). *Effect of Different Classroom Practices on the Development of Political Attitudes in High School Students*. Doctoral Dissertation. Peabody College for Teachers, Vanderbilt University.

The purpose of Butler's study was to investigate the effect of two kinds of classroom practices on the political attitudes of high school students. Specifically, Butler looked at whether there was a difference between students who studied the U.S. Constitution in traditional classrooms (i.e., those in which lecture was the dominant instructional strategy) compared to those who studied the topic in more active classrooms (i.e., those using the We the People... curriculum, small group activities, critical thinking exercises, and performance assessment). Surveys concerning attitudes about participation, efficacy, and trust were administered to students (N=176) in three high schools. One experimental group was dropped

because classroom observations indicated the instruction was similar to the control classrooms. Results indicated that students in the experimental classes were more willing to participate, were more efficacious, and were more trusting of the political system. It should be noted, however, that the students in the experimental group had significantly higher grade point averages than those in the control groups. Butler also found that there were no significant differences based on gender. There were important differences based on race, especially on the scales measuring participation and efficacy. There was no difference based on race on measures of trust.

Wilson, M.W. (1998). "Law-Related Education Program for Pregnant and Parenting Teens: Program Evaluation." In *Compendium of Research Supporting Law-Related Education, Part II: Alternative Conceptions/Applications of Law-Related Education*. Boulder, CO: Social Science Education Consortium.

The program evaluated in this study consisted of 22 one-hour seminars for pregnant and parenting teens developed by Phi Alpha Delta, the law fraternity. The goals of the program were to "demystify" the legal system, to increase the consumption of and awareness of legal services and resources available, and to increase awareness of rights and responsibilities. The program was offered at a school site in Van Nuys, California, with volunteer attorneys providing the instruction. Data was collected on 20 of the 35 girls who participated in the program during the spring semester of 1997. Data was gathered using a pre/posttest that looked at beliefs, attitudes, actual use of the legal system, and knowledge. No control group was used. Participants performed better on the posttest than on the pretest, particularly with respect to their knowledge of the law; use of the legal system and attitudes toward the law were not significantly different between pre- and posttest. The participants expressed satisfaction with the program.

Clawson, H. J., and S. Sheldon. (1998). "Teen Parents and the Law (TPAL) Program Outcome Evaluation Report." In *Compendium of Research Supporting Law-Related Education, Part II: Alternative Conceptions/Applications of Law-Related Education*. Boulder, CO: Social Science Education Consortium.

Teen Parents and the Law is a program of Street Law, Inc. It consists of 23 lessons designed to help teen parents strengthen their families and lessen the likelihood of violence in the home and community. The program intends to develop knowledge of the law pertaining to families, improve an array of skills (communication, problem solving, family management), and help students identify appropriate community resources. The program was evaluated in six classes for parenting and pregnant teens in the Washington, DC, area; 36 students participated in the evaluation. Results indicated that knowledge of the law improved significantly from pre- to posttest. Over two-thirds of the participants also improved in four of the five skills assessed (accurately identifies problem, communicates, generates options, evaluates consequences, reaches agreement/ selects solution), improving most in the area of communication skills. The data further suggest that participants' willingness to seek assistance in solving problems increased while in the program. Teachers and students responded positively to the program, with all the teachers saying they would use the curriculum again and 80 percent of students saying they would recommend the class to others.

Soule, S. (2000). *We the People...The Citizen and the Constitution: Knowledge of and Support for Democratic Institutions and Processes by Participating Students.* Calabasas, CA: Center for Civic Education. (www.civiced.org/research_students2000.htm)

The Center for Civic Education administered a survey to 355 of the students participating at the We the People... national

competition in spring 1999. The survey included multiple-choice knowledge items from the NAEP civics assessment in 1988, open-ended knowledge items from the American National Election Studies administered nationally to adults since 1952, attitude items from the Monitoring the Future study of youth's views on the political system, and attitude items from the annual survey of college freshmen. The results for the self-described "elite" sample of We the People students indicated that, in terms of their knowledge of government and the law, these students performed better on NAEP items than students in the 1988 NAEP assessment and performed better than a sample of adults who completed the National Household Education Survey in 1996. Their attitudes toward government and future participation were more positive than those of a similar subsample of students (mostly white and college-bound) who took part in the Monitoring the Future study in 1997. The We the People students also place greater importance on keeping up with political affairs, influencing the political structure, and becoming a community leader than do the national sample of college freshmen.

D. LRE at Multiple Grade Levels

Jacobson, M. (1979). *An Application of Guttman Facet Design to the Measurement of the Law-Related Attitudes of Selected Elementary, Junior High School, and Juvenile Offender Populations*. Doctoral Dissertation. Michigan State University.

The primary purpose of Jacobson's study was to contribute to the design and methodology of LRE evaluation. The study had three major objectives: (1) to develop an instrument (using the Guttman-Jordan facet design) to assess student attitudes toward the law; (2) to apply that instrument to the law-related attitudes of several youth populations; and (3) to investigate the correlates of those attitudes. Jacobson found the instrument to be a satisfactory measure of attitudes. He also found that positive attitudes toward the law decreased with the age of the population under investigation; that as the age of the population under study increased, knowledge of legal concepts also increased (although not extensive for any group); and that no significant differences could be found in attitudes based on either gender or socioeconomic differences. Finally, Jacobson concluded that elementary school students, when exposed to LRE instruction, displayed significantly higher gain scores in law-related attitudes and knowledge of legal concepts than did a control group.

National Law-Related Education Evaluation Project (NLREEP). (1984). *Law-Related Education Project Final Report, Phase II, Year 3*. Boulder, CO: University of Colorado, Center for Action Research and the Social Science Education Consortium.

From 1979 to 1984, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) funded five national LRE projects to develop and demonstrate effective methods of implementing LRE programs for purposes of primary prevention of juvenile delinquency. Several features distinguished this research and demonstration project from previous studies. The key variables were drawn from the theoretical literature on juvenile delinquency. These included items designed to assess students' commitment, attachment, involvement, belief in the necessity and fairness of rules and law, equality of opportunity, positive labeling, and successful interaction with mainstream peers. Second, the study included a number of items to assess student behavior, captured through student self-reports.

This research found that LRE, if properly implemented, could have significant positive effects on students' knowledge, attitudes, and behavior. These positive outcomes were not uniform across the 61 LRE classes involved in the study. One-third of those classes (at all levels) produced favorable outcomes. The research team adduced several characteristics that distinguished the more effective classes from the rest. These differences related to curriculum (proper selection and balance among illustrative case materials); instruction (use of

resource persons drawn from the community, sufficient quantity and quality of instruction, strategies that fostered student interaction and cooperative work); and the school context in which LRE was implemented (administrative support and collegial peer relations among LRE teachers).

Shaver, J. (1984). *The Law-Related Education Evaluation Project: A Methodological Critique of the "Impacts on Students" Findings.* Unpublished paper presented at the Rocky Mountain Regional Social Studies Conference, April.

In this paper, Shaver calls to task the first two years (1981-82) of the LRE evaluation study described above (although it seems highly likely that Shaver's major complaints would apply to the third year report as well). At the outset, Shaver stipulates that educational evaluation in the real world makes such studies difficult under the best of circumstances. With that said, he describes in great detail what he believes are the major shortcomings of the national LRE evaluation studies. First was the issue of the reliability of using students' self-reports in trying to determine delinquent behavior (indeed, there have been widespread debates about this methodology). Second, Shaver was concerned about making cause-and-effect claims based on a quasi-experimental research design. Third, he raised questions about the size of the purported effects and the reports' uses of statistical significance. Fourth, Shaver criticized the report and study for its explicit "theory testing," claiming it therefore did not speak to the concerns of its ostensible audience--teachers and educational decision makers.

Hunter, R. (1987). "Law-Related Educational Practice and Delinquency Theory." *International Journal of Social Education.* 2(2): 52-63.

This article briefly reports the findings of the National Law-Related Education Evaluation Project described in Section A. One strength of this brief article is its explicit attention to the delinquency prevention theory that undergirds many LRE programs. A similar article is Hunter (1991).

Center for Action Research. (1994). *Project PRINCE: Evaluation of Impact on Students.* Boulder, CO: University of Colorado, Center for Action Research.

The primary objectives of this project are (1) to reduce the frequency of delinquent acts committed by students and (2) to increase the attitude and social antecedents to law-abiding behavior. Teams trained through Project PRINCE are expected to evaluate the program during its implementation locally. According to these evaluations, eighth- and ninth-grade students taught by teams of teachers and police officers show substantial gains in knowledge of the law and legal processes. In addition, compared to students in the same grades at the same schools (both urban and suburban) who are taught conventional civics, government, or social studies, the LRE students exhibit more favorable attitudes toward school, teachers, police, and law-abiding behavior and commit fewer delinquent acts in and out of school.

Gottfredson, D. (1990). "Changing School Structures to Benefit High-Risk Youth." In P. Leone, ed. *Understanding Troubled and Troubling Youth.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Gottfredson's research focused on three alternative approaches that schools had used to reduce delinquent behaviors of youths who were already at risk for engaging in such problem behaviors. She reported on three programs that had been part of the Delinquency Prevention Through Alternative Education Initiative, funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention between 1980 and 1983. The three programs were (1) a pull-out program, Project PATHE (Positive Action Through Holistic Education), implemented in seven secondary schools in Charleston, SC; (2) an alternative class, Project STATUS (Student Training Through Urban Strategies),

implemented in one junior high school and one high school in Pasadena, CA; and (3) an alternative school, the Academy for Community Education (ACE) implemented in Miami, FL. By far the most effective of these models was the alternative class, which combined English, social studies, and a coordinated LRE curriculum. The instructional methods used in this class encouraged active participation (e.g., field experiences, outside resource persons, role plays and simulations). "In summary, the alternative class program was a successful treatment for reducing delinquent behavior. The positive effect appears to have resulted from an increase in attachment to school, a change in the balance of peer influence, and an increase in success experiences at school."

Carroll, J. (1992). *Report of Project LEGAL to National Diffusion Network.* Unpublished Report. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University, The Maxwell School.

Since 1976, Project LEGAL, housed at Syracuse University, has conducted evaluations of LRE infused into U.S. history courses. Over nearly two decades, these evaluations have consistently shown significant gains in student knowledge and critical thinking abilities for students in grades 5, 8, and 11 in rural, suburban, and urban school settings.

Colville, J. and Clarken, R. (1992). *Developing Social Responsibility Through Law-Related Education.* Unpublished paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, April 20-24.

This report describes the development of social responsibility among students using LRE. Social responsibility may be viewed as an essential part of citizenship education, an understanding of the basic democratic principles and values on which laws, government, and society are based. Three major aspects of LRE include expanding students' substantive knowledge and critical thinking skills, improving teacher preparation, and achieving significant changes in students' attitudes. The authors suggest that LRE programs can influence each of these concerns in a positive direction.

Branson, M. (1994). *What Does Research on Political Attitudes and Behavior Tell Us About the Need for Improving Education for Democracy.* Unpublished paper presented at the International Conference on Education for Democracy, Malibu, California, October.

This paper assesses recent research on U.S. political attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors and what it suggests about improving education for democracy. Branson examines three surveys: (1) the annual Phi Delta Kappan/Gallup survey that looks at public attitudes toward the public schools; (2) the annual "American Freshman" report on attitudes and behaviors of first-time, full-time students attending U.S. colleges and universities; and (3) the most recent survey of the Times Mirror Center for the People and the Press on the political beliefs and behaviors of the American public. Branson also examines several other studies that suggest that political attitudes can be influenced by what is taught in American schools (and how it is taught, as well).

Summary of the LRE Impact Studies

We conclude this descriptive report on LRE impact research with several observations. First, the overall quality of the studies reported here varies considerably. Several have achieved scientific, experimental designs (i.e., using matched experimental and control groups with students assigned randomly to those groups). On the other hand, many use quasi-experimental designs: these often have had difficulty achieving true random assignment of students to control and experimental groups.

Second, whatever the research design and regardless of grade level, virtually all the research reported here shows that LRE has a positive imp/act on student knowledge. Those studies that also investigate changes in attitudes and behavior also report positive changes in

these two areas when experimental (LRE) students are compared to control groups of students not exposed to LRE.

Third, when trying to assess the meaning of the findings of these research studies, one must bear in mind the fact that many national studies (not reported here) of civic education in the United States paint a rather gloomy picture of most students' (and adults') civic knowledge. A similarly gloomy picture emerges from studies of Americans' beliefs in democratic values and attitudes.

Fourth, the majority of the studies included in this survey have not been published. The inclusion of doctoral dissertations accounts for part of this situation. In addition, many of the studies reported here have been the result of particular LRE programs' conducting self-evaluations (or having contracted with outside researchers and evaluators for the same purpose). One result is that many of these studies--regardless of the intrinsic merit--go unpublished and therefore remain unknown to the vast majority of educators, administrators, and other decision-makers. This is a lamentable situation for obvious reasons.

Fifth, we feel compelled to reiterate Skeel's (1991) complaint that there is not nearly as much research concerning law-related education as one might wish. Certainly what Skeel found to be the case in 1991 continues to be true today. Although the research findings consistently favor LRE treatment groups compared with their control groups, skeptics often counter that (1) the studies are flawed in one or more ways; (2) that the research is old or dated; or (3) there are simply too few studies in too few contexts to be persuasive.

Certainly, these concerns have merit. But whatever their merit, we must bear in mind the observations of educational researcher N.L. Gage (1978), who stated:

> The invulnerable piece of research in any field of the behavioral sciences is non-existent....Thus the path to increasing certainty becomes not the single excellent study that is nonetheless weak in one or more respects, but the convergence of findings for many studies that are also weak, but in many different ways. The dissimilar or non-replicated weaknesses leave the replicated finding more secure. Where the studies do not overlap in their flaws but do overlap in their implications, the research synthesizer can begin to build confidence in those implications.

2. Research Related to Implementing LRE

The studies described in this section are highly varied, ranging from in-depth case studies on how LRE is implemented in classrooms and school districts to surveys of teachers' awareness or commitment to LRE to historical analyses of development of LRE within a state. Because the variation among the studies is so great, we have not attempted to organize them into subsections, nor have we attempted to summarize the research at the end of the section. The references are simply presented by date, with older studies first, followed by more recent works.

Wietig, P. (1979). *The Curricular Impact of Federal and State Programs in Law Related Education*. Doctoral Dissertation. State University of New York, Buffalo.

The major question of Wietig's study was: what is the curricular impact of select federal, state, and local programs on the development of law-related curricula for elementary and secondary schools? The study was based on surveys of teachers (4-12) and administrators in

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20 school districts in western New York, districts that had been involved in the Western New York Consortium for Law Related Education. Among Wietig's findings were the following: (1) teachers and administrators had a positive view of what LRE could do for their students; (2) they thought that substantial amounts of teacher training were necessary to implement such curricula; (3) they thought that infusing LRE into the ongoing curricula was the most reasonable way to implement LRE in their respective schools and districts; (4) administrative support for LRE curricula varied widely and tended to focus on financial support and on helping to schedule electives or special programs; and (5) the Amherst Title IV-C Law Project had had a significant impact on developing LRE curriculum.

Byerly, M. (1980). *The Status of Law-Related Education in Indiana Elementary Schools*. Doctoral Dissertation. Indiana State University.

The purpose of Byerly's study was to determine the status of LRE in Indiana elementary schools. A survey questionnaire was completed by 309 elementary teachers (grades K-6) in 22 elementary schools throughout Indiana (two schools were randomly selected from each of Indiana's 11 Congressional Districts). The survey contained 11 questions, including such items as the extent to which the teachers were familiar with the term law-related education, the extent to which the teachers had taken courses that would help them teach LRE, their access to LRE materials, their use of certain materials, teaching strategies, and resource people, and so forth.

The data obtained from the survey indicated that most Indiana elementary teachers were not familiar with LRE, had no training in this area, had no access to LRE materials, and were not using LRE materials, teaching strategies, or resource persons. On the other hand, the teachers indicated that they thought certain LRE concepts were important, they did spend time in teaching certain of these concepts, they thought LRE should be a required part of their preservice teacher education programs, and they were interested in having more LRE training.

Knapp, P. (1983). *An Analysis of an Educational Innovation: Law-Related Education in New York State*. Doctoral Dissertation. University of Rochester.

Knapp's is basically a historical study of the development and evolution of LRE in New York state and a status report on LRE in New York around 1980. It concludes that LRE grew in New York because of the efforts of key individuals, the robust relationship between the New York State Bar Association and the New York Department of Education, and the social circumstances of the times (1960s and early 1970s). Because of the unique relationship between the aforementioned institutions, a number of LRE projects got started and became institutionalized. These projects, in turn, represent great diversity in approach and target population.

Pickle, C. (1983). *Teacher Ability to Implement Lesson Plan Components of a Law-Related Education Curriculum in Infusing Law Concepts into Regular Classes of American History and Economics*. Doctoral Dissertation. Peabody College for Teachers, Vanderbilt University.

Pickle's doctoral study investigated teachers' ability to implement lesson plans that infused law concepts into secondary economics and U.S. history classes. The primary index of the clarity and usefulness of the lesson plans was student performance on legal knowledge. Four classes were studied, three in economics and one in U.S. history (n=4 teachers and 114 students). Additionally, Pickle used a clinical supervision model, a familiar and customary practice in the school system, to assess teacher implementation of various lesson plan components. Using this design, the study showed that law concepts could be effectively infused by teachers into their ongoing curricula.

Hyland, J. (1985). *Teaching About the Constitution: Relationships Between*

Teachers' Subject Matter Knowledge, Pedagogic Beliefs, and Instructional Decision Making Regarding the Selection of Content, Materials, and Activities. Doctoral Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles.

Hyland's point of departure was the importance of the Constitution as the supreme law of the land and the apparent failure of American education to educate youth about its principles. Hyland therefore sought to answer the question: what do teachers know about the Constitution and what do they believe about teaching? The focus of the study was eighth-grade teachers. Hyland discovered that the teachers taught in distinctive ways, but were largely ineffective in achieving student understanding of the Constitution. He found the teachers to be familiar with general constitutional principles, but lacking the ability to provide examples and showing limited understanding of these principles. Selection of content was narrow in scope and not often linked with student capabilities. Moreover, the textbook usually determined the materials used in classes. The study concluded that teachers required both substantive knowledge of the Constitution and pedagogic skills appropriate for teaching adolescents.

Furey, S. (1986). *The Influence of Selected Organizational Variables on the Institutionalization of Law-Related Education in Elementary and Secondary Schools*. Doctoral Dissertation. Boston University.

Furey's study was designed to test a theoretical model of the relationship between selected organizational variables and institutionalization of LRE in public school settings. Furey's model proposed that the combined strength of curriculum integration, the frequency and depth of linkage, and the disposition of the school toward education innovation should affect the institutionalization of LRE in schools. The study was based on a mail-out survey; 56 schools actually responded to the survey. Statistical analysis was conducted on 40 of the 56, based on the supposed viability of the LRE programs in those schools. In the end, Furey found few statistically significant links between her theoretical model and how LRE was institutionalized in the schools that completed her survey.

Palmer, J. (1986). *A Study of Trends in Content and Methodology in the Teaching of Government in Secondary Schools in the United States, 1930-1980.* Doctoral Dissertation. Auburn University.

The primary purpose of Palmer's research was to examine trends in content and instruction used in teaching government in U.S. secondary schools in the half decade after 1930. It is largely a secondary research study, looking at a variety of other studies that have charted the ebb and flow of rationales for social studies generally and for the government course in particular. Palmer concludes that despite many attempts to change and improve secondary school government courses over time, curriculum and instruction actually changed very little. Furthermore, although government teachers have many options to choose from in organizing their courses, they have generally adhered to teaching facts and describing government institutions.

Cornett, J. (1987). *Teacher Personal Practical Theories and Their Influence Upon Teacher Curricular and Instructional Actions: A Case Study of a Secondary Social Studies Teacher.* Doctoral Dissertation. The Ohio State University.

Cornett's research investigated the relationship between a teacher's underlying beliefs about curriculum and instruction and actions in planning and implementing that curriculum and instruction. Specifically, this research addressed the following questions: (1) what does the teacher view as the explicit curriculum in the Problems of Democracy course? (2) what does the teacher view as her role in the development of the curriculum? and (3) what personal practical theories guide her

instruction? The study was based on qualitative research.

Cornett found that several basic theories and sub-theories significantly influenced the teacher's action with respect to curriculum and instruction; while there was a significant degree of congruence between this teacher's basic beliefs (or theories) and her practice, there were also notable tensions as well; curriculum development was an isolated activity for this teacher and was viewed as appropriate when not done as a formal response to outside influences; the textbook served as the primary base for planning and for subsequent instruction; the teacher's planning clearly influenced what was taught; and student initiation was both accepted and encouraged.

Accongio, J., and B. Vaughan. (1987). "Evaluating Law-Related Education Programs: A Case Study." *International Journal of Social Education*. 2 (2): 69-78.

This article provides an overview of the School of Law and Government (magnet) program at Jefferson High School in Rochester, New York. It also describes a quasi-experimental design study of the program's effectiveness. The results of this study were used to revise the curriculum and to support needed staff development.

Social Science Education Consortium. (1989). *Institutionalizing LRE Programs: Eight Case Studies*. Unpublished Report. Boulder, CO: SSEC.

The purpose of this naturalistic research project was to examine how law-related education programs become institutionalized and what factors influence institutionalization. The researchers conducted intensive interviews with teachers, administrators, and resource persons (approximately 20 per site) at eight sites that had participated in the National Training and Dissemination Program (the predecessor to Youth for Justice) and were judged to have strong LRE programs. The sites were also selected to provide diversity in geographic location, general demographic characteristics, school district size, and organizational base of the state LRE project. Factors that were found to influence the institutionalization of LRE programs included the nature of the innovation (materials used, suggested teaching strategies and their relationship to district and teacher norms, etc.), school district characteristics (organization route/power and decision-making patterns, sources and kinds of program support, etc.), social climate, characteristics of individual teachers involved, and manner of implementation (training and follow-up support available and decisions about infusion, electives, and mandating).

Hardin, J., and G. Johnson. (1991). *Teachers Speak Out on Law-Related Education: Summary Report on the SPICE IV National Teachers' Survey*. Winston-Salem, NC: Center for Research and Development in Law-Related Education (CRADLE).

The study reported here was a needs assessment of teachers of LRE and citizenship. Some 1,284 K-12 teachers responded to the survey. Among the findings were: (1) need for a clearer definition of LRE; (2) need for specialized training; and (3) need for better access to materials and resources. The survey results also provide information about the variety of LRE programs being implemented and the varying stages of institutionalization. The teachers also seem quite consistent in terms of the purported impact on students of LRE, including students becoming more interested in their studies, more interested and caring about important legal and ethical issues, and students learning to think for themselves.

Jacobson, M., and R. Lombard. (1992). "Law-Related Education and the Illinois Institute for Public Understanding About the Law." *Rural Research Report*. 3 (9).

This report examines the development of LRE in rural Illinois. Concerns about providing LRE in rural schools include geographic location and the inability of rural schools to pay for the programs. Even so, rural youth have as

many or more problems as urban youth and could benefit as much from LRE. A survey conducted by the Illinois Institute for Public Understanding About the Law confirmed the low status of LRE in rural schools even though school administrators consistently commented that they would make LRE part of their schools' curriculum if they had the opportunity. The remainder of the report discusses various IIPUL activities designed for reaching rural schools (e.g., library loan of LRE materials and satellite programming and seminars).

Mitchell, R. (1992). *Testing for Learning: How New Approaches to Evaluation Can Improve American Schools.* New York: The Free Press.

To say that Mitchell was high on the evaluation process used in the We the People... competition would be an understatement. "The competition and preparation for it have lasting effects on the students' learning. Teachers assert that the knowledge learned from the curriculum and the competition is drawn on all year...." As one teacher put it, "Over and over they [students] refer back to such concepts as civic virtue or right to revolution in order to explain and put in context certain historical and modern events." Mitchell: "The competition has enormous potential as a model for the evaluation of history/social studies and government classes. It is the most imaginative and well-organized social studies assessment I know of--more impressive than current ideas at the state level. It promotes student responsibility for their own learning, makes teachers into guides rather than authorities, gives the subject a 'real life' importance for students, and allows the students to experience a stimulation of healthy risk.... 'That was the worst thing I've ever had to do, and the best,' said one student. The mystery is why 'We the People...' has not been seized as a model. The evaluation is faithful to the intent of social studies and government: understanding the Constitution's origins, how it works, and its application today.... If a model such as the 'We the People..." competition were adopted and community members became expected members of evaluation teams, the schools would go a long way to solving their public relations problems...."

O'Brien, J. (1992). *An Analysis of the Relationship Between the Federal Government and National Law-Related Education Projects, 1962-1987.* Doctoral Dissertation. University of Virginia.

O'Brien's is an historical study of the relationship between federal government funding sources and select national LRE projects. He organizes the 25-year focus of his study in three periods, which are distinguished by differing rationales and approaches to LRE as well as by the prevailing sources of federal funds. The programs, instructional materials, publications, and professional services of the national organizations are analyzed in terms of these prevailing rationales and federal funding sources in each of the three time periods.

McBee, R. (1993). *Demistifying [sic] Research in Education and the Social Sciences: A Primer for LRE Folks.* Unpublished paper (ERIC number: ED 381481).

McBee's article argues that the LRE community should understand education research methods better to demonstrate to policy makers and funders the value of LRE and to evaluate alternative educational strategies. The article deals with research procedures and reporting formats, quantitative and qualitative research designs, experimental and non-experimental designs, and so forth.

King, B. (1994). *Teaching for Thinking and Citizenship Education: Examining the Constitution of Student-Citizens in Secondary Social Studies.* Doctoral Dissertation. University of Wisconsin-Madison.

The purpose of King's research was to examine the association between teaching for higher order thinking and the notion of a socially transformative citizenship in 12 social studies classrooms (in four secondary schools). The study found that a commitment to classroom thoughtfulness on the part of teachers did not

necessarily translate into thoughtful treatment of civic content. For many teachers in this study, teaching for thinking and citizenship for the most part involved the transmission of knowledge, not higher order or critical thinking. In addition, although some teachers embraced a multicultural perspective, they tended simply to add more content about underrepresented groups to an already jam-packed curriculum. The study suggests that pedagogy appropriate to higher order thinking probably necessitates a shift away from traditional instruction in the social studies.

Wolff, R. (1994). *South Dakota Principals' Perceptions About, Attitudes Toward, and Knowledge of Law-Related and Civic Education Practices in Their Schools.* Doctoral Dissertation. University of South Dakota.

The overall purpose of the study is reflected in its title. A survey was sent to all school principals (in public and Bureau of Indian Affairs schools) and was returned by 71 percent of the recipients. The findings included the following: (1) the principals' perception of LRE well matched the goals and definitions as set by national LRE organizations; (2) their idea of civic education reflected a transmission rather than participatory model of instructional goals; (3) 84 percent believed that some form of civic/LRE was being taught in their school; (4) their teachers infrequently used specific law-related teaching strategies; (5) the principals placed more importance on teaching law and civics at high school than at the elementary level.

Wolowiec, J., ed. (1994). *LRE Research: A Status Report. Technical Assistance Bulletin No. 8.* Chicago, IL: American Bar Association Special Committee on Youth Education for Citizenship.

This bulletin begins with an article by David Naylor, "Research and Law-Related Education: Perceptions, Perspectives, and Possibilities," which examines five categories of questions important to LRE research. These include: (1) what is the nature and status of LRE? (2) what impact does LRE have on the lives of students? (3) what is needed to teach LRE effectively? (4) how should teachers be prepared to teach LRE? (5) what is required to get and keep LRE in school programs? In addition, Naylor explores what function research can (and must) provide. The remainder of this bulletin examines summaries of some of the LRE research in progress and proposals for several other LRE research studies.

Neisler, O. (1995). *Inside Social Studies at Castleton High: Young Citizens Discuss Their Citizenship Education.* Doctoral Dissertation. Syracuse University.

The focus of this qualitative research was on high school students' perspectives about the materials, information, activities, and interactions they experience in their social studies courses. Data were collected via classroom observations, in-depth interviews with students, analysis of classroom materials, and the school newspaper. The findings concern three areas of high school social studies (especially citizenship education). First, students reported they were bored by their social studies courses; they did not understand the purposes of these classes; they felt restricted in their discussions and explorations of current social and political problems. Second, students were in the process of changing their sociopolitical attitudes with respect to a number of issues, experiencing a process described by adolescent psychologists Ianni and Seltzer. Third, students had little knowledge about the state political structure, despite taking a participation in government course; they were cynical about the political process and generally unenthusiastic about participating in that process; and students appeared to be unaware that citizenship education is the purpose of the social studies courses they take. The study closes with a discussion of developing more engaging classrooms and the obstacles to doing so.

Cornett, J. (1996). *Portraits of Four Exemplary Law-Related Education Teachers: Insights from a Qualitative Study of Teacher*

Practice. Unpublished paper. Florida Law Related Education Association.

The purpose of Cornett's research was to describe the classroom practice of four exemplary LRE teachers from the perspectives of each teacher, the researcher, and key stakeholders such as students and administrators. Two major assumptions guided the study: (1) field-based research about exemplary LRE instructional practice is limited and, therefore, preservice and inservice teacher training is not informed by carefully documented examples of such classrooms; (2) for teachers to be empowered to continue to improve their practice, they must explicitly understand the assumptions underlying their practice. The study is not only suggestive about some of the characteristics of exemplary LRE teaching, it is also noteworthy for its use of action research methods and for involving the teachers directly in the study of their own practices.

"North Carolina High School Strategy Survey." (July 1997). *Center.Link: Research Bulletin of the Center for the Prevention of School Violence* 1, no. 2. Http://www.ncsu.edu/ cpsv/strategy.htm. *of the Center for the Prevention of School Violence* 1, no. 2. Http://www.ncsu.edu/ cpsv/strategy.htm.

The Center for the Prevention of School Violence in North Carolina conducted telephone interviews with 307 high schools in the state to determine to what extent safety and security strategies recommended by the Center (school resource office, law-related education, conflict management and peer mediation, SAVE, Teen Court, and physical design and technology applications) are in place. With respect to law-related education, the interviews revealed that just over half the schools indicate LRE programs are in place. In terms of perceived effectiveness, the most common rating was a 3 (with 1 being very effective and 7 being not at all effective). On average, SROs were rated as most effective (average rating 1), followed by physical design and technology applications and Teen Court, which was only available in 10 percent of the schools (both rated 2). Other strategies rated 3 were conflict management/peer mediation and SAVE.

"School as the Beat, The." (February 1998). *Center.Link: Research Bulletin of the Center for the Prevention of School Violence* 1, no. 3. Http://www.ncsu.edu/cpsv/Research_ Bulletin_National.htm.

Staff of the Center for the Prevention of School Violence in North Carolina surveyed 353 school resource officers attending a national conference; while not a representative sample, the survey respondents serve as the starting point for constructing a profile of SROs. With respect to SROs' role in law-related education, this survey indicated that SROs spend 17 percent of their time teaching law-related education lessons; this average reflects variation from no time spent teaching LRE (9 percent) to teaching 15 or more lessons weekly (4 percent).

Albin, Maria, and Helen Peoples. (1998). *The Effect of a Law-Related Education Course on the Attitudes of Civics Students at an Alternative High School*. Unpublished Research Paper. Bozeman, MT: Youth Imperative.

This study examined an LRE class's impact on students' attitudes in an alternative high school in a university town in a Northwestern rural state. The six-week, once weekly course was taught by two attorneys and featured presentations by outside resource persons; the course was designed to reflect the key elements of LRE identified in the CAR/SSEC study. Twenty-three students took part in the experimental class, while ten participated in the control class, a regular civics course. A 17-item attitude survey was administered before and after the LRE course. Questions asked about students' views of various professionals in the legal system (police, judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys) and the law. The results indicated that experimental students' attitudes significantly improved, while control students' attitudes remained essentially the same. The greatest improvement was in attitudes toward

attorneys; the least improvement was in attitudes toward laws.

Tolo, K. (1998). *An Assessment of We the People...Project Citizen: Promoting Citizenship in Classrooms and Communities*. Austin, TX: Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, University of Texas.

This study was a formative assessment of Project Citizen, the Center for Civic Education's middle school civic action program. The assessment primarily looked at issues related to implementation, although the researchers also asked teachers and students how they thought students benefited from participating in the program. Among the findings reported was that while Project Citizen is sufficiently flexible to fit into many classroom settings, teachers face challenges in implementing the program. Teachers and students who participate in Project Citizen report liking the program and benefiting in a number of ways (e.g., increased self-efficacy, increased knowledge about and commitment to solving community problems, etc.). State coordinators also face challenges in recruiting and training teachers; these challenges revolve around limited funds, time, experience, and availability.

ABA State Project Survey Summary. (1999). Chicago, IL: American Bar Association, Division for Public Education. Http://www.abanet.org/publiced/lre/summary.htm.

The ABA surveyed the directors of state law-related education centers to determine what services they offer to LRE teachers and resource people in their states. The survey indicated that the most commonly offered programs are various kinds of staff development activities for teachers (offered by 70 percent of the respondents), mock trial competitions (64 percent), lending libraries/resource centers (47 percent), youth summits (40 percent), and lawyer in the classroom activities (36 percent). The most commonly offered products are newsletters (53 percent), mock trial scripts/scenarios (45 percent), lessons and curricula (35 percent), and brochures informing young people about their rights (20 percent). A large majority of the state centers (86 percent) had at least some relationship with their state bars.

3. LRE in Non-School Settings

South Carolina Department of Youth Services. (1986). *Juveniles and the Law Diversion Program: Preliminary Evaluation Report*. Unpublished Report. Columbia, SC: South Carolina Department of Youth Services, Planning and Information Section.

The South Carolina Department of Youth Services evaluated the effects of a juvenile diversion program for youth entering the state's juvenile justice system. The program was developed to provide an LRE alternative for first time juvenile property/public order offenders who otherwise would risk judicial processing. The evaluation of the program showed (1) measurable gains in knowledge of legal concepts; (2) a measurable improvement in recidivism (defined as a new referral to court following program completion) rates among program students--7 percent overall compared to the nine-month rate of 36 percent for children in all diversion programs combined; and (3) a modest reduction in prosecution rates for property/public order offenders in target counties.

Buzzell, T., and R. Wright. (1992). *Law-Related Education in Juvenile Corrections: Evaluation Results from the Iowa State Training School*. Unpublished Paper. Des Moines, IA: Iowa Center for Law-Related Education, Drake University.

In an evaluation of an LRE program instituted at the Iowa State Training School for Boys (a secure facility for adjudicated juvenile

offenders), Buzzell and Wright found that instruction in LRE positively influenced risk factors commonly correlated with delinquent behavior. The results suggested that LRE could play a positive role in juvenile correctional programs.

Fox, J., K. Minor, and W. Pelkey. (1993). *The Relationship Between Law-Related Education Diversion and Juvenile Offenders' Social- and Self-Perceptions*. Unpublished Paper. Richmond, KY: Eastern Kentucky University.

This study focused on an LRE diversion alternative in Kentucky's Designated Court Worker Program. All delinquents and status offenders, age 12 to 17, who meet the general criteria for diversion are eligible to participate in the LRE option. The main purpose of the LRE diversion program is to teach attitudes and perceptions that are inconsistent with delinquent behavior. The study obtained data on the juveniles' perceptions of themselves, their parents, neighbors, best friends, judges, teachers, and police. Comparing these offenders' perceptions with those of a quasi-experimental control group of high school students revealed favorable outcomes correlated with LRE participation. Of especial note was the change among the divertees' perceptions of police. The recidivism rate of the juvenile divertees after one year was also low.

Buzzell, T. (1994). *An Evaluation of Teens, Crime and the Community in a Juvenile Diversion Setting*. Unpublished Paper. Washington, DC: National Crime Prevention Council

Buzzell's study sought to determine the impact of a *Teens, Crime, and the Community* program implemented as a community-based educational intervention for selected juveniles who had frequently appeared before the County Juvenile Court. The evaluation was designed to measure changes in student knowledge of the law and rule-based concepts and to assess whether students incorporated any of the pro-social skills taught in TCC into their behavior patterns. The evaluation suggested that TCC participants exhibited a greater understanding of (1) the purposes of law and the processes of justice; (2) empathy for crime victims; (3) links between law and behavior; and (4) the consequences of behavior. The study also indicated that participating juveniles learned a number of important pro-social skills, including (1) conflict management; (2) problem solving in groups; (3) confidence in conversations with adults; and (4) for some, the use of skills for developing alternatives and thinking about the consequences of certain actions and choices in conflict-laden situations.

Wright, R., T. Buzzell, S. Wright, and F. Gay. (1994). Promoting Cognitive Development Among Young Offenders Through Pre-Trial Intervention. In N. Pallone, ed. *Young Victims, Young Offenders: Current Issues in Policy and Treatment*. New York: Haworth Press.

This study assessed the effectiveness of an intervention program for youthful offenders in Iowa based on a cognitive approach to rehabilitation. The diversion program for selected first-time, low-risk youthful offenders (ages 16 and 17 adjudicated as adults and 18 and 19 year olds) included seven components, including LRE. The study examined the impact of the intervention on (1) attitudes toward the criminal justice process; (2) sense of personal accomplishment and ability; and (3) sensitivity to the views of others. The strongest result was an increase in positive attitudes toward the criminal justice system (e.g., police, courts, and probation officers). The researchers also found that there were negative changes in the other two areas of examination (i.e., sense of personal accomplishment and sensitivity to the views of others).

Gannon, C. (2000). *Fresh Lifelines for Youth Executive Summary*. Unpublished Report. San Jose, CA: Fresh Lifelines for Youth Project.

The Fresh Lifelines for Youth project (FLY) is a diversion program for youth at risk or

involved in the juvenile justice system. Youth ages 12-17 are referred to the program by a probation officer, neighborhood accountability board, juvenile court, or school officials. The program seeks to increase students' knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behavior with respect to the legal system. Its components include an LRE course (two hours weekly for 15 weeks), a mentoring program, and helping young people connect with social services they and their families need. Evaluation instruments were completed by 40 youth who have gone through the program. The results suggest that the program has a positive impact on youth's behavior, their knowledge of the law, and their thinking about moral and legal dilemmas. In addition, the youth participating overwhelmingly enjoyed the program and felt they benefited from their participation.

Wells, J.B., K. I. Minor, and J.W. Fox. (2000). *A Descriptive Study of Kentucky's 1998-99 Teen Court Program.* Unpublished Report. Richmond, KY: Eastern Kentucky University.

The researchers collected data from participants in the Kentucky Teen Court program during the 1998-1999 year; data collected included pre/posttests of knowledge and attitudes among teen court volunteers and defendants. Exit evaluations were also conducted with these participants, their parents, and site coordinators and judges. Information on teen court subjects and sentences was collected, and field observations were conducted. The researchers also collected and analyzed data on recidivism for defendants sentenced in the preceding four years of Teen Court.

Among the findings reported by the researchers are increased knowledge among volunteers, but no changes in attitudes toward teen court for the group, who had relatively positive attitudes prior to participation. Defendants' attitudes toward teen court were more moderate and were lower after participation than before. However, in the exit evaluations, defendants and their parents were generally positive about the teen attorneys, the way in which they were treated, and the sentence. Expressed concerns tended to related to problems with the process by which the teen courts were operated. Defendants were less positive about police than volunteers, both during the pre- and posttest. The most frequently imposed sentences were community service, letter of apology, jury duty, essay preparation, and workshops. Of the defendants in the previous four years of teen court, roughly two-thirds completed their sentences; approximately 27 percent had at least one subsequent court appearance for a new offense in the year following their sentencing in teen court. Defendants who were male, had prior records, and were sentenced to curfew or received community service were more likely to have a new offense than other defendants.

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